



State of California
Respiratory Care Board
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Inquiry: I work for a company that manufactures a blood gas analyzer that can report bilirubin. Is it legal for California RCPs to report bilirubin along with a blood gas?

Response: The question you asked regarding the ability of a licensed RCP to report an analyzed bilirubin is somewhat of a dichotomy. Obviously, the instrument is capable of measuring the bilirubin as outlined in the manual and as long as the user follows the manufacturer's quality control and maintenance schedule. However a bigger question would be where the organization has determined the appropriate and consistent bilirubin should be reported from. If the organization has purchased the device and intends on using it exclusively to report its bilirubin's, then it would be appropriate for an RCP to report the value. That is assuming that the device is operated in a blood gas laboratory or cardiopulmonary laboratory that is staffed by licensed RCP's. It would also be equally appropriate to have the device operated within the organizations clinical laboratory where values would be reported by the appropriate laboratory personnel. In other words, the onus is on the medical facility to determine if duplicate results are acceptable or not at their facility.

It should be noted that if the organization has purchased the analyzer to function primarily as its blood gas analyzer and has established that the reporting standard for bilirubin is other than the radiometer device, then the reporting of these bilirubin values may not be appropriate and may actually cause confusion and potential harm to a patient.

Reference # 2003-C-26